

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-01 PA-01 INR-01 /005 W

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R 271114Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

UNCLAS BANGKOK 21139

USIA FOR IEA, IOP/M, IBS, IPS, IOR/RIM; STATE FOR EA/TB, S/NM

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: THAI MEDIA REACTION -- NARCOTICS

LEFTIST BANGKOK NEWSPAPER PRACHACHART, IN AN EMOTIONALLY-
WORDED EDITORIAL JULY 27, SAYS THAILAND'S DRUG ADDICT POP-
ULATION, WHICH, THE PAPER SAYS, NUMBERED 400,000 IN 1975,
IS NOW 600,000. EDIT DISCUSSES VARIOUS METHODS OF DEALING
WITH THE DRUG PROBLEM, INCLUDING KEEPING ADDICTS IN ISLAND
PRISONS TO ISOLATE THEM FROM THAILAND'S NORMAL PRISON SYSTEM
WHERE NARCOTICS ARE AVAILABLE, "BECAUSE OF THE LOOSENESS
OF THE PRISON SYSTEM" AND THE GET-RICH-QUICK TEMPTATIONS
OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICING.

EDIT CONCLUDES, "BECAUSE THE NARCOTICS BUSINESS IS A
SHORT CUT TO WEALTH AND TEMPTS GOOD OFFICIALS TO TAKE UP
DISHONEST WAYS, WE FEEL THAT HOWEVER STRONG AND FIRM THE
PRISON WALL MAY BE OR EVEN IF NARCOTICS ADDICTS ARE PUT ON
AN ISLAND, NARCOTICS CAN REACH THEM IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER,
SOONER OR LATER. EVEN IF MEASURES EFFECTIVE ENOUGH TO PRE-
VENT NARCOTICS FROM REACHING THAT ISLAND, ARE EMPLOYED, THERE
IS NO ASSURANCE THAT, HAVING BEEN CURED, THEY WILL NOT USE
NARCOTICS AGAIN, BECAUSE IN TODAY'S SOCIETY THERE IS NO
GUARANTEE THAT WILL KEEP YOUNGSTERS OFF THE WRONG PATH.

"THE CURRENT SOCIAL CONDITION IS ONE IN WHICH PEOPLE
RACE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER SELFISHLY. THOSE WHO ARE DESPERATE,
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THOUGHTLESS OR JOBLESS LOOK FOR AN OUTLET BY USING NARCOTICS

AND COMMITTING CRIMES. THIS IS HOW THEY CAN EXIST IN A SOCIETY WHICH IS CULTURALLY ROTTEN, FILLED WITH PROSTITUTION AND ROBBERY; A SOCIETY WHICH LACKS EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DEPRIVES MAN OF HOPE AND A CHANCE TO EXIST IN IT. THUS, ONE EXIT IS NARCOTICS.

"AS LONG AS WE DO NOT CHANGE THIS SOCIAL CONDITION TO ONE OF EQUALITY AND OF EQUAL POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES, WE WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF NARCOTICS, NO MATTER HOW LARGE THE BUDGET FOR SUPPRESSION AND TREATMENT MAY BE."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DRUG CONTROL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BANGKO21139
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760289-0184
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760719/aaaaaqok.tel
Line Count: 73
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUN 2004 by chengls>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THAI MEDIA REACTION -- NARCOTICS LEFTIST BANGKOK NEWSPAPER PRACHACHART, IN AN EMOTIONALLY-
TAGS: SNAR, TH
To: USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006